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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the simulation technique described in this report is to develop teacher and counselor empathy with the Spanish-speaking student. The technique, developed to be used with English-speaking college students, includes the use of a class conducted in Spanish, a simple form written in Spanish to be completed by the students, punishment for the use of English in the classroom, and class discussion in English after the simulation. Findings include the fact that many students are not aware of the problem faced by Spanish-speaking children, that few students realize the number of Chicano students in Michigan, and that few students are acquainted with the migrant education program in Michigan. (PS)

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A DESCRIPTION OF SIMULATION TECHNIQUE TO DEVELOP TEACHER AND COUNSELOR EMPATHY WITH THE SPANISH SPEAKING STUDENT

The technique was developed by four Chicano students at Eastern Michigan University: Mr. Michael Falcon, Miss Nancy Falcon, Mr. Jose Flores, and Mr. Corky Rodriguez and Mrs. Bettie Magee, a doctoral student in counseling at the University of Michigan. The basic technique is not new. It was used for the training of Michigan Migrant Education teachers and aides by Dr. Guadalupe Saavedra of Texas and later by Mrs. Rosa Torres of Lansing for in-service training in the same program. I first read of the technique in a journal for bi-lingual education where it was reported as effective in the training of Peace Corps teachers who were going to foreign countries. Our particular technique is a modification of the above and is not static. We learn from each experience and are continuously changing our format based on the reactions of our audiences.

We gave our simulation numerous times in 1972 to classes at Eastern Michigan University, Counseling groups and classes at the University of Michigan.

I am introduced in the classroom by the Professor as a guest lecturer who will discuss the problems of education of Mexican Americans. I walk to the blackboard and write as follows: "NO ENGLISH WILL BE SPOKEN IN THIS CLASSROOM. ANYONE SPEAKING ENGLISH WILL BE PUNISHED." I introduce Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores and ask the class to cooperate with them for the next twenty minutes.

Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores hand out the form (attached) and tell the class in Spanish that they have five minutes to fill out the form. The form is a combination of simple data - name, address, birthdate, sex, income, etc. written in colloquial Spanish. It is meant to represent the endless number of forms used in institutions - application for Welfare, hospital admission, school admission etc. It has no one specific purpose as it is written except to force the class to attempt to answer simple questions in Spanish. During the five minute period Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores urge the class to hurry and walk around the room to see how everyone is doing, stopping at specific desks to make comments in Spanish. At a certain point I write on the blackboard "Dos minutos mas," and then "Uno minuto mas." The forms are then collected hurriedly and given to me.

Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores then begin a lesson in simple Spanish. One of them draws a bird (pajaro) and then a dog (perro) on the board and forces the class to repeat simple sentences regarding the animals. Responses are elicited in unison and individually. During this phase of the lesson someone usually walks in the classroom late and is verbally attacked in Spanish. Also during this phase someone usually whispers to a classmate in English.

Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores look carefully for the English speakers and when one is discovered, he or she is brought roughly to the front of the classroom. A dunce cap is provided with the word "Tonto" written on it. The student is forced to repeat "Soy estupido" several times. If the student does not cooperate he is forced to stand in the corner

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or removed from the room. Students who cooperate are patronized verbally or patted on the head. An attempt is made to discipline at least three students during the simulation.

Following the simple lesson in Spanish Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores explain in Spanish that they are Chicanos. They then proceed to various students around the room saying" Soy Chicano, y Usted? Que eres?" This is repeated many times until the student understands and ordinarily Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores are forced to say - "Repite - Soy Gringo," Other words are used such as "Soy gabacho" "Soy Anglo" or in the case of black students "Soy Tinto" or "Soy Negro."

The word "tinto" was chosen to avoid the offensive word "Negro." One student responded vigorously "Soy Afro American," which enlightened everyone else as to what was going on. This part of the simulation lasts approximately 10 minutes since we feel that several students should respond until everyone understands.

Following this the students are asked and encouraged in Spanish to stand and put their right hand over their hearts. They are asked to repeat one line at a time several sentences. Ordinarily each sentence is repeated five or six times.

This part of the simulation corresponds to the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. used in many public schools. In English the pledge to Aztlan (written by Mr. Falcon and Mr. Flores.) states that:

> "We are children of the sun, we are children of the race. Our race is brave and noble. We are citizens of Aztlan. We would die for Aztlan. We come from a noble heritage. "
> Viva la raza.
> Viva Aztlan."

For the last two sentences each person is encouraged to raise his right hand in a fist.

I then ask the students to sit down. In English I explain to them that they have just participated in a setting similar to that faced by a non English speaking child in a classroom. I then explain the historical facts regarding education of Chicanos in the southwest stressing the fact that the discipline, subtle nastiness, patronizing, etc. are minimal in our simulation to what Chicano children have endured and are still enduring, particularly in rural Texas.

I comment to the class on their reactions - nervous laughter, rebellion, withdrawal, anxiety, confusion, and relate these reactions to the reactions of the Spanish speaking child.

Modifying the Saavedra technique, we believe that at this point feedback is vital. If the class is large I divide it into groups and the next half hour is spend in groups (no more than 12 in each group.)

Ordinarily I do not try to lead a group. If I have enough Chicano students present, I arrange for a Chicano student to lead each group. This period is spent in discussing emotional reactions to the simulation with student questions and feedback. The Chicano students have been trained to respond to racism, hostility and honest questioning.

Following group discussion we meet again as a whole. During this time I ask my Chicano students who led the groups to comment on what happened in the groups. I explain the form, why it was used, and show them how simple the form really was and how inadequately it was filled out. Occasionally someone who has had highschool Spanish can fill out about half of the form, and I comment on this. I also point out the sex item - H y M and show them how simple this part is if they know the words Hombre y Mujer. Ordinarily everyone misses this part of the form. I then tell them that we don't want to get too involved with the form, and we move on to the deeper issues. At the end of the class period two handouts are distributed. One is my article on "Generalizations" with bibliography, the other as a group of selected writings from EL GRITO and additional personal comments. I always tell the group that the simulation should be conducted and really must be conducted by Chicanos since only Chicanos can imitate adequately the attitudes of Anglo teachers and counselors.

Recently we have ended the simulation silently and Corky Rodriquez has begun to play his guitar and sing before any verbal material. He has written two Chicano protest songs, both excellent in content, and in Spanish and in English. Following this I have said simply "We will have a five minute break." This has been a dramatic and effective ending to the simulation part of the program.

This has been a year of learning for us. We have had to guess in each classroom how far we can go with discipline. We find that some groups are able to accept the simulation and others are not. We inevitably find one or more hostile student and encourage him to verbalize that hostility. For example, we have never had a class where someone has not said that people living in America must adjust to the system and learn English. We have also encountered disbelief. Fortunately most students tell us honestly that they were not aware of the problem and ask what they can do to help. Few students have realized that there are 267,000 Chicano students in Michigan and over 31,000 Chicano youngsters in the public school systems of our state. Few are acquainted with the migrant education program in Michigan.

We believe that with mature audiences we can be more hostile and use stronger discipline simulation. During the period of panel in the group as a whole we try to keep abreast of current events such as the bi-lingual educationazt of Massachusetts so that we can inform the students of positive attempts for solution.

We believe that our technique is helpful and should be used for teachers in training as well as teachers, administrators and counselors employed in school systems. We have offered to teach this technique to others who would like to use it.

Bettie Magee
May 1, 1972

Rackham Graduate School
U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

DATOS DEL ALUMNO

Apellido _____ Nombre _____

Dirección _____ Teléfono _____

Fecha de Nacimiento _____ Sexo H____M____ Edad: Años ____
Meses ____

Años que vivió en el mismo _____

¿Que facilidad tiene Usted para hablar? (Marque un espacio en cada columna)

Inglés	Español	Otra Idioma (Indique cual es) _____ (idioma)	
____	____	____	Lo habla perfectamente bien
____	____	____	Lo habla bastante hien
____	____	____	Lo habla un poco
____	____	____	Lo entiende pero no lo habla
____	____	____	No habla ni anie entiende el idioma

Apellido y Nombre

Padre _____ Madre _____

Ocupación _____ Ocupación _____

Ultimo año escolar que completó

_____ _____

¿Donde recibió la mayor parte de su educación?

_____ _____
País o estado País o estado

Ingreso de la familia:

Menos de $1999. _____ $4000. a $6000. _____
$1999. a $3999. _____ $7000. o mas _____

Número de personas que viven en el hogar. _____

Número de personas de ménos de 21 años. _____

Nombre de esta escuela _____

Maestra _____

Escuela _____

Fecha (hoy) _____